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C O N F I D E N T I A L RIGA 000324

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/06/2019  
TAGS: [OSCE](#) [PREL](#) [NATO](#) [PGOV](#) [LG](#)  
SUBJECT: CORFU MINISTERIAL: LATVIA AGREES BUT WITH CONCERNS  
REF: SECSTATE 57920

Classified By: CDA Bruce Rogers for reasons 1.4 b

1. (C) Latvia agrees with USG goals for the Corfu Ministerial, but expressed concern about implying that the OSCE had "failed" in its response to events in Georgia in August. Juris Pekalis, head of MFA's European Security and NATO division, largely agreed with the idea of focusing on existing institutions and with the suggested areas in which the OSCE could be made more effective. He reported receiving a similar demarche from the German embassy. However, Pekalis did express concerns. In particular, he rejected the implication that the August conflict in Georgia should be characterized as an OSCE failure, or even an example of less-than-optimal performance, which could imply that the blame did not fall fully on Russia's shoulders. He was insistent that one could not say the OSCE had done anything wrong when one country had simply chosen to behave poorly. Less vehemently, Pekalis expressed some reservations about a truly "open-ended" discussion, and suggested the idea of the OSCE anniversary conference in Helsinki next summer as a potential target date for deliverables on any proposed changes to the OSCE.  
ROGERS